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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION

Initial reports of States parties due in 1992

Addendum

SUDAN*

[2 June 1993]

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* The present document contains the additional information requested by the Committee on the Rights of the Child at its third session during the consideration of the initial report of Sudan (CRC/C/3/Add.3) on 26 and 27 January 1993 (see CRC/C/SR.69 to 71); see also the report of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on its third session (CRC/C/16), paras. 110-122.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Government of the Republic of the Sudan, particularly its delegation to the third session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, would like to state that it appreciates the understanding and cooperation shown by the Committee during its consideration of the initial report of the Sudan (CRC/C/3/Add.3) in the presence of the delegation. This provided an opportunity to initiate a useful and objective dialogue, as desired by the Government. The Committee also demonstrated a similar desire and affirmed this type of positive trend, which helps to steer its work and enables the States signatories to the Convention to benefit from the exchange of opinions with the Committee on the best means of implementing the provisions of the Convention in the interests of children; it was to benefit children, protect their rights and enhance the quality of their protection that the Convention was originally framed.

2. This report constitutes the reply of the Government of the Republic of the Sudan to the preliminary observations of the Committee (CRC/C/15/Add.6). First, the Government would like to express its willingness to attend the fourth session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, to be held from 20 September to 8 October 1993. It also appreciates the Committee's observations concerning the initial report of the Sudan, adopted at its 73rd meeting, held on 28 January 1993, and would like to voice a general comment on the content of section C, entitled "Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention". It is said in paragraph 6 that these factors are related to the civil war, the structural changes in the national economy, the inadequacy of the infrastructure, the spells of drought and desertification. Although these have constituted obstacles, they have not impeded implementation of the Convention in the Sudan; it would be more appropriate to say that they have prevented certain provisions of the Convention from being implemented in the ideal manner to which the Government aspires, in keeping with its firm commitment towards the children of the Sudan and its determination to ensure that children receive first priority under all conditions and circumstances.

3. In fact, the efforts made by the Government of the Sudan, despite these circumstances, are conclusive proof of its concern with and commitment to the rights and happiness of children; the Sudan is the country which introduced security corridors in areas of fighting and sought to cooperate with United Nations agencies, in particular the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and with national voluntary and friendly organizations, to ensure the delivery of relief supplies to children, mothers and all citizens throughout the whole of the Sudan, including the areas controlled by the rebel movement. This endeavour on the part of the Sudan, which broadened the scope of authority of the United Nations and its agencies in the field of humanitarian assistance, prepared the way for duplication in other regions of the world. In firm cooperation with the United Nations, the Sudan initiated and supervised Operation Lifeline Sudan and faithfully observed the agreements concluded within its framework with United Nations agencies, voluntary organizations and donor States. It remains committed to this humane approach, following the signing of the Nairobi Agreement between the Government of the Sudan, the United Nations and the rebel movement on 5 December 1992.

4. The encouraging news in this report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child includes the fact that relief operations have resumed by all available means - train, lorry and river boat - to the town of Juba and all areas situated on the banks of the White Nile between Kosti and Juba. Air transport was also resumed, even before the land and river transport, and is still continuing. It is true that some rebel movement factions attempted to hinder the delivery of relief to some areas, even attacking some shipments dispatched by river under the United Nations flag. However, the obstacle was overcome by the generous intercession of the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, who impressed on the rebel movement the need to fulfil its commitments concerning the smooth flow and non-obstruction of relief supplies. The cease-fire agreement between the Government and the rebel movement assisted the progress of the relief operations in which the Government, the United Nations, an increasing number of international and national friendly volunteer associations, and donor States took part.

5. Regrettably, once fighting had ceased between the Government and the rebel movement, clashes occurred between factions of the rebel movement, causing the Government and United Nations agencies to fear for the lives of citizens in the areas where the clashes were taking place. Various parties, including some Governments, denounced such inhumane action on the part of the rebel factions, and the Government issued a statement that the cease-fire between the rebel movements should be comprehensive to ensure the well-being of citizens, particularly children, in all areas.

II. FOLLOW-UP TO THE PRINCIPAL OBSERVATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD ON WHICH IT REQUESTED FURTHER INFORMATION

6. The head of the delegation submitted the observation contained in paragraph 7, concerning the non-compatibility of certain areas of national legislation with the provisions of the Convention, to the National Council for Child Welfare, the Ministry of Justice and the Public Prosecutor.

7. The Minister of Justice and the Public Prosecutor formed a Committee, headed by the head of the delegation, Mr. Ahmed Abdelhalim. The membership of the Committee is as follows: (a) a representative of government headquarters; (b) a representative of the standing committee on legislation belonging to the transitional National Council or "Parliament"; (c) a representative of the judiciary; (d) a representative of the National Council for Child Welfare; (e) a representative of the Ministry of Education; and (f) a representative of the Ministry of Health. The membership also includes legal advisers from the Office of the Public Prosecutor and the National Council for Child Welfare.

8. This Committee is charged with the task of reviewing all laws pertaining to children and determining whether they are consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child concerning Sudanese legislation. It then submits recommendations with a view to eliminating any contradictions between the provisions of the law and those of the Convention, which, following legal ratification by the Sudan, became an intrinsic part of the Sudanese law. It is hoped that the Committee will submit its recommendations to the Council of Ministers as a preliminary to their submission to the

transitional National Council or "Parliament" for legal amendment, as advised by the Council of Ministers in the light of the Committee's recommendations.

9. The National Council for Child Welfare organized a seminar on the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in the Sudan, which was held on 8-9 May 1993 at the headquarters of the transitional National Council under the auspices of the latter's Vice-Chairman. Participants comprised members of parliament, representatives of the National Council for Child Welfare, representatives of children's organizations and voluntary associations working with children, representatives of the Ministries of Health, Education, Labour and Administrative Reform, Justice, Finance, and Planning and Investment, representatives of the National Urban Water Board, and the National Rural Water Board, university professors, child experts and workers, development and social workers, trade unionists, youth organizations and students. UNICEF also had an influential presence, and lent financial and technical support to the seminar.

10. The head of the Sudanese delegation attending the Committee on the Rights of the Child delivered a paper on the progress made in implementing the Convention in the Sudan, focusing on the constructive dialogue which took place at the Committee's third session. The seminar issued a number of recommendations, including:

(a) A review of all child-related laws, and collating them in one volume for easy reference;

(b) A need for the Government to continue to increase human and material resources allocated to child-targeted services;

(c) Steadfast follow-up by the National Council of implementation of the Convention through its technical committees, and follow-up of implementation of the National Plan for Child Survival, Protection and Development, with firm cooperation between the National Council for Child Welfare and the National Committee on Population;

(d) In cooperation with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, ongoing follow-up of the situation of children held by the rebel movement;

(e) The continuing establishment of branches of the National Council for Child Welfare in the provinces.

11. The head of the delegation submitted to the Government observation contained in paragraph 8, about putting into effect article 4 of the Convention in that it relates to matters of international cooperation to facilitate the implementation of the Convention, notably in connection with the relationship between the Government and voluntary organizations. The Government wishes to affirm that its relationship with United Nations and voluntary organizations, particularly with regard to child survival, protection and development, is consistent with the provisions of the Convention and the two instruments stemming from the World Summit for Children, namely the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and

Development of Children and the Plan of Action to implement it. The Sudan's National Plan for the Survival, Protection and Development of Children is moving ahead smoothly and its positive effects are increasing with the passage of time. It has facilitated the three Operation Lifeline Sudan agreements between the Government of the Sudan, the United Nations and the rebel movement, which include the security corridors to the areas of armed conflict in the south of the country and relief supplies of food, medicine and vaccines to Sudanese children throughout the entire country.

12. Sudan has excellent relations with UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Office of the High Commission for Refugees, the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Health Organization, all of which have established cooperation programmes with the Government of the Republic of the Sudan. Many of these programmes relate to children, women, the family and the environment, thus assisting implementation of the Convention in the Sudan.

13. The Government's present relations with national voluntary and friendly organizations are excellent, as in the past, with the exception of the tension, brought on by circumstance, which tarnished relations with a small number of organizations which failed to comply with the laws, agreements and practices to be observed in such instances. However, relations have now been restored to normal, thanks to the joint efforts of the Government, the United Nations, some voluntary organizations and various States.

14. The agreement concluded between the Government of the Sudan, the United Nations and the rebel movement in Nairobi on 5 December 1992 concerning the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the south of the country, including the areas of armed conflict controlled by the rebel movement, had a positive effect on relations between the Government and friendly voluntary organizations; within one month, the Government had convened a meeting with a number of the main friendly voluntary associations. As a result, the condition that foreign associations should be registered was done away with and replaced by a draft agreement, signed by the Government with the voluntary associations. The signed agreement encompasses a programme for cooperation and sets forth the commitments of both sides. The essence of the Government's commitments under the agreement is that it should facilitate the work of international voluntary organizations and permit them to travel in all areas in need of services. The emergence of this agreement coincided with the Government's decision to remove the condition requiring applications to be made for permission to travel in all areas in need of services.

15. In its endeavour to expedite the work of associations, the Government established the Office of the Commissioner for National Action, which operates as a focal point between voluntary organizations and government institutions in order to facilitate the tasks and needs of those organizations in terms of residence, securing the necessary workforce, customs exemptions and so forth, the aim being to ensure that their performance benefits the essential recipients. Moreover, the Government has additionally undertaken to provide food to all those who need it, including the rebels, allowing it to be delivered through the World Food Programme and voluntary organizations.

16. The new agreement has not affected the position of the voluntary organizations whose relations with the Government are conducted through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, with which the agreement has been re-signed, enabling it to carry out its activities in situations of emergency and fighting and to deliver essential food, medicine and clothing. Regular meetings are held each Monday between the Government, voluntary organizations and the United Nations in what is known as the Relief Coordination Committee. A meeting of States and donor organizations is also held every Wednesday. It is thus clear that numerous guarantees have been provided to coordinate action and expedite the provisions of humanitarian assistance to all those in need and in all areas, including those of armed conflict.

17. As to observation contained in paragraph 9 concerning the situation of children in areas of armed conflict, including the provision of humanitarian assistance and relief and protection of children, the comments concerning observation in paragraph 8 show that "special" care is directed towards children and that valuable efforts are being made by UNICEF, the World Food Programme, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Red Crescent, national voluntary organizations and the provincial authorities, in firm cooperation with the Government and the coordinator of Operation Lifeline Sudan, to protect children and respond to their needs. The embassies of some States are also making useful efforts in this respect, particularly in contacting the warring rebel sides who hampered the arrival of the transport carrying food and other items provided by the Government of the Sudan. The truth of the situation is that the Government has undertaken to provide all essential food required. Three days ago, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs appealed to active organizations, Governments, regional groups and friendly voluntary organizations to step up their assistance in evacuation operations; it was concerned about the children held by the rebel movement, which had evacuated some of them to neighbouring States and others from refugee camps in Kenya to an unknown location. The Government continues to maintain its timely contacts with the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, which has promised to cooperate in this respect. Appreciable efforts are being made by the Government, international organizations and voluntary organizations to reunite all children with their families in every area.

18. Comments on the observation in paragraph 10 concerning the situation of internally displaced children and refugee and neglected children are as follows:

A. Displaced children

19. The initial report (CRC/C/3/Add.3) and the expert's replies to the Committee's questions provided detailed information on displaced children and the situation of persons displaced by the spells of drought and by the civil war. The reason for the Committee's additional questions is perhaps attributable to the adverse reports spread by some of the voluntary associations which were in dispute with the Government over their improper conduct, referred to in the reply to the previous observation. Another reason may be the biased reports circulated by some of the media at the bidding of parties opposed to government efforts to transfer displaced persons to the peace villages in the Directorate of Khartoum, rather than to unsuitable

campsites. These efforts were scorned by some voluntary organizations in their campaigns for donations, which they did not want to lose. In so doing, they were oblivious to the harm suffered by the displaced, who remained in those sites, notably the infamous Kusha Camp, near the industrial zone in Khartoum North, where industrial waste, smoke and insanitary water accumulated around and inside the fringes of the camp. The allegations made were disproved by the reports of Mr. Jan Eliasson, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. Francis Deng, the Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights issues related to internally displaced persons, and Mr. Kouchner, the French Minister for Humanitarian Affairs, following their visits to the former camps from which displaced persons were transferred, and the new camps set up by the Government. The United Nations, UNICEF in particular, the World Food Programme, some voluntary organizations, CARE International, Concern (Ireland), Save the Children Fund (United Kingdom), Save the Children Federation (Sweden), and some donor States helped to provide health, education, housing, food and purified drinking water. We transmit with this report a copy of the statements of Mr. Eliasson, Mr. Francis Deng and Sudanese officials concerning displaced persons, refugees, humanitarian assistance issues and relief in general.* The Office of the Commissioner for Displaced Persons, CARE International and the National Committee on Population issued a report on the findings of the socio-economic survey which they conducted on the situation of refugees in the peace villages in Jebel Awlia and Omdurman, focusing on the methods used to register displaced and distribute foods and services.

20. The Committee may be pleased to learn the CARE International is helping in the construction of permanent homes for the displaced persons who decided voluntarily to stay in Khartoum Province following the government decision to grant them housing allowances in the context of the housing plan for people in the province. Implementation of the first phase has now begun.

21. An important fact which should be emphasized is that, as a result of the help provided by the State, which established the Office of the Commissioner for Displaced Persons, and by various national, regional and international organizations, some camps now enjoy higher living standards than the Sudanese villages nearby. Examples of the organizations which have lent support are the Netherlands branch of Médecins sans frontières, Concern (Ireland), CARE International, the Islamic Da'wah Organization, the Islamic African Relief Agency, the Sudanese Red Crescent, Save the Children Fund (United Kingdom) and Save the Children Federation (Sweden and United States of America).

22. Further encouraging news is that the situation in most government-controlled areas in the south has stabilized. There has been a large influx of displaced persons returning voluntarily to their original home

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* These documents may be consulted in the files of the Centre for Human Rights.

in the south and some areas of south Kordofan, south Darfur and south of the Blue Nile. The Government has established a new foundation with great potential, known as the Peace and Development Foundation, which has worked to resettle displaced persons and restore services in many towns and rural areas. It has also established various production projects, particularly in agriculture, and has set up model villages which are superior to the former villages destroyed in the war.

23. These efforts are receiving valuable support from several United Nations agencies and from national friendly and voluntary associations. The Government has striven hard to reopen schools and reintroduce health and social services in many of the towns and villages in the south. It has also endeavoured to accommodate displaced boys and girls in government schools in the areas of displacement in the north on an equal footing with their peers. These children additionally have their own schools.

B. Refugees

24. There are two aspects to the refugee issue. The first is that, for several years now, the Sudan has been the biggest place of refuge for large numbers of Africans who have been made refugees by the conflicts and disasters besetting neighbouring States. The Sudan is surrounded by nine African States; accordingly, displaced persons, whose numbers now exceed two million, made their way to the Sudan from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda, Zaire, the Central African Republic and Chad. The Sudan has a clean, substantial record of hosting refugees and treating them well. It has frequently been commended on this score by the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, which values its generous efforts to host refugees, despite the difficult circumstances which it has sometimes suffered. The Organization of African Unity has thanked the Sudan for its efforts and its treatment of refugees, while our achievements in that sense may be confirmed by the statements, transmitted herewith, of Mr. Jan Eliasson and Mr. Francis Deng. The Sudan has established a special office for refugees, which works in close cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, other United Nations agencies, the Organization of African Unity and the Governments of neighbouring States.

25. The second aspect of the refugee issue relates to the Sudanese citizens who have been made refugees by the civil war in the south of the country, even though their numbers may be small compared with the numbers of displaced persons who have chosen to migrate to the northern provinces. The Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees and neighbouring States, notably Kenya and Uganda, are making considerable efforts to alleviate the hardships of these refugee citizens, and the Government maintains contact with them to confirm the refugees' well-being. A question of serious concern for the Government is the situation of children in the hands of the rebel movement whom it has taken out of the country, as already stated earlier. A recent positive feature in this area, however, is the voluntary return of some refugees in the Sudan to their home countries, coupled with the return of some Sudanese refugees to their home soil.

C. Homeless children

26. In the initial report submitted by the Sudan to the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the discussions in which the delegation of the Sudan took part during the Committee's third session, it was stated that the Government is addressing the problem of homeless children. Although only recent, this is a phenomenon which is causing great concern. The Government has established a national committee to deal with the problem and conducted a thorough survey in order to learn of its extent and suggest ways of tackling it. The report also illustrated the priority given by the State to the family and social welfare of the homeless, the aim being to achieve their social rehabilitation and reintegration. The trend towards establishing foster camps and rehabilitating homeless children who are without family protection was equally highlighted.

27. In this report, we should like to add that national camps have been set up to foster and rehabilitate homeless children in Fau and Durdib in the Eastern Province, the rural north and the town of Omdurman, in Kartoum Province. A practical programme has been drawn up to provide physical, spiritual, psychological and social rehabilitation for these children within a period of not more than six months. Adults will receive vocational training while those with the appropriate levels of knowledge will continue in academic education. In this way, the camps will harmonize with the local environment. Basic needs have also been met with a view to enabling the camps to fulfil their integral role.

28. The following table gives statistics concerning homes, the number of children they accommodate, the types of building and the basic facilities available:

Camp	Location	No. of children	Type of building	Basic facilities available
Dar Bacha'er for girls	Omdurman	62	Permanent	General water and electricity, electricity services, television, video.
Hajar Abu Dum	Rural north, Khartoum Province	480	Straw huts	2 electricity generators, radio, tape recorder, 4 televisions, 4 videos.
Fau	Eastern Province	460	Reed and Straw huts	Electricity generator, mill, TSJB71 primus stove, television, video.
Durdib	Eastern Province	278	Permanent	Electricity generator, mill, TSJB71 primus stove, television, video.

29. Children are distributed among the camps according to age group, in line with educational principles, as follows:

(a) The Hajar Abu Dum Camp is for children aged seven to nine;

(b) The Fau Camp is for children aged 10 to 13;

(c) The Durdib Camp is for children aged 14 to 18;

(d) The Bacha'er Camps at Omdurman are for girls of various ages.

Health services

30. A permanent medical clinic has been established in each camp, comprising a medical auxiliary or nurse, as the situation requires. Specialist doctors also visit the camps twice weekly, and medicines are provided through the project's executive committee. A Higher Health Committee was also formed in Khartoum Province by the Minister of Health and Social Welfare, who is the Chairman of the Higher Committee on the Problem of Homelessness, with a view to supervising health in the camps.

31. In terms of standard education, a normal school, comprising the first three classes at basic education level, has been opened at the Hajar Abu Dum Camp. It offers all activities and is supervised by the camp administration. Basic education classes are also provided in all the other camps, with teachers appointed by the Ministry of Education. The camp also has literacy and adult education classes, which are attended by those who missed the opportunity of a normal education. The children live permanently in the camps and are permitted to visit their families whenever the occasion requires. They are also visited frequently by their relatives.

32. Implementation of the second phase of the project, involving vocational training, has begun; since the beginning of last April, 153 students from the Durdib Camp have been sent to learn carpentry, metalwork, leatherwork, electrical work and car mechanics at the technical centre in the Islamic Complex at Omdurman. A programme has also been developed to train the girls from Dar Bacha'er in domestic skills, cutting, sewing and embroidery at the same technical centre. The remaining students from the Durdib Camp will be sent this month for vocational training at the Vocational Training Institute in Port Sudan.

The plan for the future

33. Tenders have been invited for the establishment of three vocational training centres for homeless children in Omdurman, Kosti and Geneina with a view to alleviating the hardships of homelessness. These centres are expected to become operational next year, when they will be attended by "completely" homeless children from national camps who are physically, spiritually and psychologically competent, by "partly" homeless children, and by children from impoverished families who are liable to become homeless.

34. There is also a plan to reunite these children with their families once the training stage and the national camp programmes have ended. The plan will then have achieved its objectives of eliminating this problem and transforming homeless children into a productive force with a role to play in supporting the national economy.

35. With regard to observation contained in paragraph 12, concerning allegations of forced labour and slavery in the Sudan, it is truly bewildering to be asked to deny something which does not exist. In such instances, the bodies making these groundless accusations are probably basing their evidence on that bewilderment. However, the Government has drawn up a detailed reply for submission to the International Labour Office and the Commission on Human Rights. The essence of the reply is that situations which are completely different from slavery have been wrongly depicted as enslavement. In reality, however, they involve tribal disputes and arguments over pasture and water resources in some areas where there is an overlap between tribes. As a result, each tribe involved in a dispute captures members of the other tribe or tribes while waiting for the conflict to be settled according to tribal traditions and customs. The same happens in various other countries where tribal societies still abound, notably in Africa. The Government is willing to provide a copy of this report and the results of its consideration by the International Labour Office and the Commission on Human Rights. However, it would prefer at the moment to leave the matter to those two bodies, as it was they who raised the issue within their respective purviews.

36. With regard to observation in paragraph 13, under Sudanese law, a child is basically defined as every individual under the age of 18; references in laws to persons under that age are made in order to safeguard certain rights or deal with displays of discreditable conduct on the part of some children. However, children are not dealt with as criminals; offences which they commit are examined by special social institutions or courts. In the juvenile court, which is regarded as a social institution, the police do not appear in uniform. The children who come before it are dealt with by non-specialists and by specially trained judges, and are given opportunities to contact their families and lawyers. Restrictions on their freedom are preferable; they are placed in educational homes run by specialist social workers and teachers. Families may have regular contact with any of their children in such homes.

37. As for the comments concerning the definition under the Criminal Law Act whereby the age of majority is reached when a person manifests obvious external signs of puberty and has reached the age of 15, this is not inconsistent with article 1 of the Convention, which states: "For the purposes of this Convention, a child means every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable, majority is attained earlier". Nevertheless, the committee formed by the Public Prosecutor and the Minister of Justice to review Sudanese legislation in the light of the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child will consider this matter in its review of the laws.

D. Education

38. The Committee on the Rights of the Child pointed out that the section of the report which discusses education focuses on policies and plans - and not on the achievements attained as a result of their implementation. We should therefore like to present the following additional information:

39. In 1991/1992, the school enrolment age was lowered from seven years to six. Enrolment ratios for girls and boys aged six and over rose with the support from the central administration, grass-roots effort and other measures, such as introducing a secondary cycle, with the focus on the least advantaged provinces. As a result, the enrolment ratio for children from these provinces rose. The plan was given priority and extensive support in three provinces, specifically Darfur Province, Kordofan Province and the Eastern Province, where the enrolment ratio in basic education is now slightly above 60 per cent. In three other provinces, namely the Northern Province, Khartoum Province and the Central Province, the enrolment ratio now exceeds 90 per cent.

40. The southern provinces receive special consideration in view of the security situation there; in the southern security zones, new schools offering basic education have been opened in order to increase the enrolment ratio in the secure towns. In Darfur, the ratio rose from 62.9 per cent in 1990 to 70 per cent in 1991; in the Eastern Province from 62.2 per cent to 83 per cent; and in Kordofan from 64.5 per cent to 89.6 per cent.

41. One of the alternative measures introduced to raise the educational level of women in areas where it is low was to open Quranic schools for girls. In 1991/92, there were 104,608 girls and boys in Quranic schools. Implementation of the new measure to increase the number of years in basic education to seven began in the 1991-1992 school year in the entire north and south of the Sudan.

Improving the quality of education

42. All the objectives set forth in article 29 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child have been achieved in terms of general education curricula, as follows:

(a) Twenty-five per cent of the school plan covers practical activities to develop the child's personality, cultural identity and national values, a sense of responsibility and a spirit of understanding and tolerance;

(b) The school environment has been introduced as a secondary school subject and also takes the form of practical activities in the core curricula for basic education;

(c) Courses at teacher training institutes have been extended from one year at post-secondary level to four years at university level; graduates receive a diploma with basic education as their specialization. The conversion of seven institutes in various regions of the Sudan for this purpose has now begun.

Equal education and work opportunities and equal participation in social and political life for both sexes in the Sudan

43. The Sudan is viewed as one of the few countries in the world where men and women receive equal pay for equal work. Even in the United States of America, this is not the case, whereas in the Sudan it has been so since 1970. Women have equal work opportunities, pay and post-service benefits.

44. The Sudan is also one of the few countries where working women have maternity and child-care rights. They are granted two months' maternity leave on full salary, together with the normal right to annual leave. They also have the right to unpaid leave for up to two years in order to care for a newborn child, while still retaining their posts at work. The joint rule (Anglo-Egyptian) which lasted from 1898 to 1956 neglected education in general, fought against women's education and established no schools during the first 20 years of rule. As this ran counter to the wish of citizens for girls to be educated, an educated man named Shaikh Babakr Badri was prompted to establish the first girls' school in the 1920s. This he did by his own effort and with local help in Kharij, a town located a long way from Khartoum; the aim was to avoid a clash with the Government. The idea was accepted and encouraged by Sudanese society, which compelled the Government to establish girls' schools in Khartoum. This retreat on the part of the joint rules encouraged the Shaikh to transfer his school to Khartoum.

45. This belated start of girls' education in the Sudan and the slow pace at which it developed throughout the colonial period remains the obvious cause of the discrepancy in education levels between girls and boys, a discrepancy which successive Governments have actively striven to reduce.

46. Since independence, no distinction has been made between girls and boys, as confirmed by the policy statement made by the Head of State in December 1990, a policy which has now been implemented. Girls are afforded the same opportunity to continue in higher education, depending on their abilities; the ratio of female enrolment in the largest university in the Sudan (University of Khartoum) in 1992 was 52 per cent. There are female basic education teachers in all girls' schools, mixed schools and a large number of boys' schools; the ratio of female to male school teachers in basic education is 70 per cent.

Overall literacy and adult education

47. With the assistance of an expert from UNESCO, a plan for a comprehensive literacy campaign was drawn up, to begin in 1991 and end in 1995. In the first year, teachers were trained, the curriculum was drawn up and the necessary books were printed. In the second year, the campaign for all provinces was launched in Darfur, which has the highest number of illiterates (1,000,000 in 1990). In 1992, 714,000 people in Darfur achieved literacy. There are still approximately 200,000 illiterates, who will achieve literacy by 1993, or before the deadline in the plan. This year, a village in Darfur held celebrations when its last illiterate member achieved literacy. Darfur

has taken steps to ensure the success of the campaign, such as spreading official and grass-roots information and mobilizing voluntary and official organizations.

Conclusion

The Government of the Sudan reiterates its appreciation to the Committee for its concern with the situation of the children in the Sudan and affirms its commitment to lasting cooperation with the Committee, which plays a noble humanitarian role on behalf of the international community. The Government is fully willing to provide the Committee with information, either in written form or at its fourth session to be held in September.